

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph on page 1 before the paragraph titled "TECHNICAL FIELD":

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of international application PCT/US00/07107, filed 16 March 2000, which claims priority from U.S. patent application 09/270,957, filed 18 March 1999, now US 6,441,996, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application 09/149,727, filed 8 September 1998, now US 6,391,547, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/052,263, filed 9 September 1997; these applications are incorporated by reference in their entirety.

Please delete the sixth full paragraph on page 6 and replace with the following paragraph:

Figures 5A-G present amino acid alignments of different β -glucuronidases. Alignments of *Staphylococcus* GUS (SGUS) *E. coli* GUS (EGUS) and human GUS (HGUS) are presented in Figs. 5A-B. Amino acid alignments of *Staphylococcus*, *Salmonella*, and *Pseudomonas* β -glucuronidases are shown in Figs. 5C-E. Nucleic acid sequence alignments of *Staphylococcus*, *Salmonella*, and *Pseudomonas* β -glucuronidases are shown in Figs. 5F-G.